

## **The Secret to Successful Internships (Outline of Session)**

JoAnn McManus, Internship Grant Coordinator  
Mary Jo Ryan, Communications Coordinator  
Nebraska Library Commission

The 2016 Nebraska Library Internship Grant Program is supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Nebraska Library Commission, in partnership with the Nebraska Regional Library Systems.

.....

### **Two Audiences Today**

Libraries funded in the 2016 Nebraska Library Internship Grant Program

Others interested in tips for Successful Internships in your Library

### **So what is the Secret to Successful Internships?**

#### **P L A N N I N G**

“PLANNING makes all the difference. The detailed calendar was extremely useful.  
It kept us on track.”

### **Did you ever....**

Inquire about a job opening and the supervisor had trouble describing job duties?

Start a new job and your supervisor wasn't prepared to start your training, provide an orientation, or provide you with expectations?

Feel like you were only productive for a small portion of your first 8 hours on the job?

## **With Short-term Internships....**

You don't have the luxury to waste your intern's time if you want them to be productive during the internship period —wasting their time ultimately leads to your time being wasted.

So invest time BEFORE the internship starts. This gets the internship off on the right foot and can serve as a template to use for your next internship.

## **Preparing for an Intern/Internship**

How are you planning to pay your intern?

Those that received an internship grant generally will have \$1,000 available to them.

But any library can be creative in their efforts to find funding to support an intern.

Check with your friends group, have a fund raiser, ask a local business to partner, etc.

## **Two ways to provide payment to interns**

Hire the intern as a part-time temporary employee and pay hourly wage

**OR**

Use a stipend-based internship & provide intern with one or more (suggested) stipend payments that total what you plan to pay (*in our grant generally \$1,000 for one intern or about \$500 each if you have two interns*).

## **How much to pay?**

Stipend-based: Stipend, at a minimum, must be equivalent to minimum wage (\$9.00/hour in Nebraska)

Employee: Hourly wage at a minimum of \$9.00/hour

**Exception:** For new employee under age 20, during the first 90 days of employment you can choose to pay a “training wage” of at least 75% of federal minimum wage ( $\$7.25 \times .75 = \$5.44/\text{hour}$ )

Remember you may want to check with the city or county (if associated) to see if they have any guidelines to hiring or providing stipends they want you to follow.

## **Come Up with Goals & Outcomes**

Do BEFORE you determine work plan/intern duties.

Nebraska Internship Grant Program goals include:

Involve the student in real library work

Provide view of: role of libraries, library operations, & role of technology

Ensure internship serves as recruitment tool to help the student view library work as a viable career path

Now add your own goals related to specific needs you have in your library

Such as....

- Expand a Program
- Start or Expand Library Social Media
- Update the Library's Website
- Reorganize the Children's section

## **From Goals to Work Plan...**

Determine the duties of the Intern

Successful internship grant applicants have already described those duties.

Do you need to stick to your described list of activities?

Or, can you update that submitted plan and take a different direction?

It's possible your grant application was successful partially because of the list of activities you described...

On the other hand, we want you to:

- Provide a great experience for the student
- Make use of your intern's talents and skills, and
- End up with work product that really helps your library

So if you wish to make adjustments, we want to be flexible enough to allow you to ensure the internship is a success.

Our Request: When deviating significantly from your grant-funded work plan, email JoAnn McManus as to what's new and what's been eliminated so any issues with the new (or dropped) activities can be addressed.

## **Duties described by 26 funded library grant applicants**

### **Program Related:**

Plan, assist, implement and/or expand...

- Summer Reading Program

- Storytime

- Youth Book Club

- Teen Programs

### **Event Related:**

- Annual Book Sale

- Art Show

- Photography contest

- 3-D printing workshop

- Entrepreneurship Camp

- Lego Club

- Local Street Dance

- One-time teen events

- Outreach events taking place outside the library

### **Reorganize or Organize:**

- Young adult center

- A "do-it" center

### **Research:**

- An alternative circulation system

- Feasibility of portable maker space using equipment the library owns

### **Technology Related:**

- Help with weekly maintenance of the computers

- Assist in creating library's technology plan

- Develop curriculum & teach technology classes

### **Social Media/Web Presence:**

- Update library's website

- Update Facebook page

- Pinterest

- Send Tweets

**Creativity Outlets**

- Create book displays
- Decorate bulletin boards
- Plan craft activities

**Public Relations:**

- Create flyers & marketing materials
- Reformat the online and print newsletters
- Work with youth to produce a video

**Book Related:**

- Restock shelves in the library
- Unload & re-shelve resources in the Bookmobile
- Process books (new & donated)
- Repair books
- Weed
- Book selection

**Assist Customers:**

- At circulation desk
- Using public computers
- Using devices
- Researching answers to questions

**Miscellaneous**

- Upload content to digital archives
- Assist/create volunteer training process for digital repository project
- Assist with Spanish/English translations both verbal and written
- Supervise volunteers & activities
- Update program materials
- Create tutorials to use features of online catalog
- Create list of kid-friendly games & websites

**Timing of Internship**

Determine the best time to have an intern in your library

Consider student's schedule

Consider best time for library

NOT your busiest time—start the internship at a time it's not as crazy so you can devote time to getting the intern started on that special project.

## **Recruitment...**

What are the skills and attributes an intern needs to be successful performing tasks?

What is the best age range for the student for your situation?

Do you want to recruit a college or high school student? Or be open to either?

Is any age high school student too young?

Remember if the student is under 16, there are hour and time of day limitations during the school year. An employment certificate is also required.

## **Recruitment – So, now that you know...**

- Whether you are hiring a part-time employee or a stipend-based intern,
- What the job duties are, and
- What skills would be ideal,

You are ready to search for your intern

## **How do you get the word out?**

Local newspaper (both article & classified ads)

High school career/counseling office and school librarians

Community college, colleges & universities

Post in Library

InternNE.com (1-stop for paid internships in Nebraska)

Other ideas?

## **Selection and Interviewing**

Do you need to follow the same process you would if you were hiring a permanent employee?

If you are hiring a part-time employee, check with the City/County to see if they have any interviewing guidelines you need to follow.

If you are having a stipend arrangement, you may be able to be less structured

Take process seriously -- Ask every candidate the same questions & consider having more than one person on the interview team.

Put your best foot forward -- A structured interview process lets students know this is a real work relationship. They are more likely to treat the internship like a real job

with responsibilities and consequences (leading to a more successful internship experience).

### **Develop a standard set of questions that will enable you to determine...**

If they have the skill set you are looking for?

Will they be dependable?

Will they be open to learn new things?

Do they have the social skills needed?

If they are interested in the task areas they will be working on?

Do they have an interest or talent in other areas that might be an even better direction for the internship?

### **More on the Interview**

Determine criteria for your consideration before you start the interview process.

Doing so before you know who the candidates are will help you to refocus on what you thought was important.

After the interviews—select your new intern

### **You found your perfect intern...**

Agree on a start date

Before the first day:

Share your thoughts/plans with other staff

Take another look at the work plan. Should it be tweaked to capitalize on your intern's talent?

Get organized.

Have a plan (what you'll do & what you want the intern to do).

Put that plan in a "flexible" timeline

### **Your timeline will include...**

Introduce intern to projects to be completed

Orient the intern to the work of the library (even if tasks are limited)

Share information about education and career paths in library careers.

## **Follow the intern's progress...Why?**

So you are prepared to report on progress

To allow you to make adjustments/provide guidance.

Perhaps they didn't understand the assignment

If progressing faster than expected, they will need another assignment

It allows you to make timely feedback

Makes it easier for the intern to ask questions

Other benefits?

## **What leads to a good experience for the intern (other than the \$1,000)?**

Gained valuable experience (so make sure they learn something)

Can use internship on future job & college applications (so give them "meaty" tasks)

Feel they made a difference in lives (so have them work directly with customers)

Made new friends (so make sure they work with several employees/volunteers)

What else leads to a good experience?

## **What leads to good experience for the library and library staff?**

Intern may have skills that staff do not possess

Intern can help to make a "stale" project fresh – new perspective

You notice where there is room for improvement—because intern is asking why?

You notice you are getting new customers

You find the intern would be a great part-time employee--opportunity to explore new funding sources

You have a fresh website or expanded program or something similar—great opportunity to market this



## **Resources for you....**

<http://nowhiringatyourlibrary.nebraska.gov/Internships.asp>

Proposed Timeline and Schedule of Internship Activities (example)

Sample Public Library Orientation Plan

Employer Guidebook to Developing a Successful Internship Program (*found on NDED's website & linked from our site too*)

InternNE.com (*one-stop for paid internships in Nebraska*)

## **Grant Requirements & Expectations**

Agreement – sign both and return one

Request for payment form – sign and return; triggers a check to your library

Internship Window – No earlier than March 15, 2016 & Wrapped up by November 30, 2016 (you can advertise and interview students before March 15<sup>th</sup> if you are ready and anxious to get started.)

## **Grant Requirements & Expectations**

The Intern(s) selected may be either:

High school student or college student (*a home-schooled high school student is also permissible*)

The student must NOT have been

Employed by a library in the past or currently

Been an intern for a library in the past or currently

(*no restrictions on past or current volunteers*)

## **Grant Requirements & Expectations**

Use of grant dollars ONLY for:

Stipends going directly to the intern

Intern wages going directly to the intern

Withholdings associated with wages (FICA, taxes)

After internship, library director will be asked to sign a form attesting to how grant funds were expended.

## **Supervisor responsibilities**

Orient the student to overview of library work.

Track intern's hours and activities

Make intern aware of library career path educational opportunities

Complete supervisor assessments and report in a timely manner

Instruct the intern to complete the baseline survey and the post-internship assessments (*first and last days of internship*)

Respond to requests from Nebraska Library Commission

## **Publicity**

Library received Press Release Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>

Media received Press Release Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>

In all publicity, credit the Nebraska Library Commission in all internship publicity as follows:

The 2016 Nebraska Library Internship Grant Program is supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Nebraska Library Commission, in partnership with the Nebraska Regional Library Systems.

## **Questions & Answers**

Contact

**JoAnn McManus**

Nebraska Library Commission

Grant Program Manager

[joann.mcmanus@nebraska.gov](mailto:joann.mcmanus@nebraska.gov)

402-471-4870; 800-307-2665